



2 P

AFT Connecticut  
AFT, AFL-CIO

Healthcare  
Higher Education  
Public Employees  
PSRP  
Teachers

Testimony of  
Nickimmy Cunningham Hayes, Union Organizer  
AFT Connecticut

LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 1, 2010

**H.B. No. 5460 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CAPTIVE AUDIENCE  
MEETINGS**

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Nickimmy C. Hayes and I am a union organizer. I help workers to form their own unions. I am here to testify in support of H.B. 5460, An Act Concerning Captive Audience Meetings.

In my eight years at AFT Connecticut I have worked on many organizing campaigns. Most of them have been at non-profit organizations, mainly hospitals. I have never worked a campaign in the last eight years where the employer did not use an anti-union campaign that included captive audience meetings. Management uses these meetings as a way to coerce and intimidate workers.

In past organizing drives I have seen workers fear that just from a conversation with a union organizer they will be terminated. At a campaign at Danbury Hospital, service and maintenance workers were lead to believe that if they signed a union authorization card they were signing over the rights to their homes. And, for foreign citizens who were here on a work visa, management at UConn Health Center led them to believe that joining a union could somehow jeopardize their stay here in the U.S.

Captive audience meetings are a powerful tool that management uses to pressure people not to exercise their legal right to make their own decisions about joining a union and they should be stopped. I urge you to support H.B. 5460.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

35 Marshall Road  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067  
860/257-9782  
Fax: 860/257-8214  
Toll Free: 888/398-3373  
www.aftct.org

Sharon Palmer  
PRESIDENT

Melodie Peters  
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Leo Canty  
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas Bruenn  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

VICE PRESIDENTS

John Altieri  
Ronda Barker  
Erin Benham  
Dennis Bogusky  
Joanne Chapin  
David Cicarella  
Art Costa, Jr.  
Tom Culley  
Tanya Crump  
Kathie Daly  
Patti Fusco  
Betty Gadson  
Andrea Johnson  
Patrica M. Keavney  
Phyllis Kornfeld  
Paul Krell  
Ann Lohrand  
Jean Morningstar  
Chuck Morrell  
Harry Rodriguez  
Kathleen Sanner  
Rick Tanasi



SUBMITTED TESTIMONY OF  
KEVIN B. MALONEY, 4016 MOUNTAIN RD, WEST SUFFIELD, CT  
OPPOSING  
HB-5460, AAC CAPTIVE AUDIENCE MEETINGS  
BEFORE THE LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 10, 2011

I am a small business owner operating a company in Windsor Locks and a member of the National Federation of Independent Business. I am writing today to express my strong opposition to this bill.

While I agree that no employer should have the right to mandate meetings for the purpose of communicating the employer's opinions on religious matters, I insist that I be allowed to retain the right to address my employees on political and labor matters that will affect their jobs and their future. We view our employees as partners in our company's progress and my experience has been that they in turn look to us for leadership in these matters.

Secondly, there is a far more important issue involved here. Our newly elected Governor has made a number of public pronouncements to the effect that, "Connecticut is open for business", and he has vowed to create a more business friendly environment. This bill, even the proposal of this bill, sends exactly the opposite message to those businesses within our state and more importantly, to those businesses considering relocating to our state.

On the list of "business friendly" states, Connecticut ranks 47<sup>th</sup>; how much lower can we sink before we completely preclude the revival of our economy that we so desperately need to raise us up out of the financial morass we find ourselves in today? It is, in my opinion, absolutely irresponsible to be proposing bills such as this one and the paid sick leave proposal in the present economic environment.